

# Seattle Light Rail Review Panel

## Meeting Notes for April 26, 2000

### Agenda Items

- MLK Corridor Follow-Up
- Briefing on Northgate and Roosevelt Stations

### Commissioners Present

Jon Layzer, Chair  
Matthew Kitchen  
Carolyn Law  
Paul Tomita

### Staff Present

Debora Ashland, Sound Transit  
Marty Curry, Planning Commission  
Barbara Goldstein, Arts Commission  
Lisa Merz, CityDesign  
Cheryl Sizov, LRRP

Jon Layzer chaired the meeting. LRRP business was taken care of, including the minutes of the meeting on April 5, 2000. Paul Tomita questioned an issue regarding the presentation by Henry Boyar. The draft minutes indicated that there will be a 4 foot 3 inch planting area and that the height of the trees will be limited to 20 feet. The Panel asked staff to verify if that is true. The minutes of the meeting April 5<sup>th</sup> meeting were then approved pending verification of this issue.

Other business included a discussion of a "Notice of Public Hearings" pertaining to Light Rail Permitting and Station Area Planning Recommendations. As Cheryl Sizov noted, there is no current language in the Seattle Land Use Code to permit a light rail facility. Consequently, provisions will be made to permit the issuance of permits for light rail. There will also be recommendations for the planning of station areas. Public and private property outside of the right-of-way will have to be looked at and since the City regulates such property, amendments to the land use code may follow. The Station Area Planning Team is holding public meetings to ensure that goals and ideas suggested by the communities are heard. Schedules of meetings were noted in the handout. There will be a briefing this Monday to the City Council regarding resolutions and concept recommendations. The number to listen in on conference calls for the City Council is 684-8566.

Marty Curry discussed the Northgate event that is coming up on May 6<sup>th</sup>. The Planning Commission is holding a one day charette looking for options for connections to light rail transit. The Planning Commission, Library, and Parks department will all be involved. SPO is doing an evaluation of the current Northgate plan. The focus will be on connections for Light Rail and examples of what has been done elsewhere will be shown. Jon Layzer asked for a briefing on the results of the workshop at a later date.

Cheryl Sizov presented a preliminary draft of Design Guidelines for Light Rail. The goal is that this document will serve as a well organized, concise, document that City staff will have for use during the permit process for Link to ensure consistency with the recommendations and work of the Panel. It states what the City's expectations are for stations. Comments from the retreat are also incorporated into this. A more complete draft should be done by June 1<sup>st</sup>, with public comment occurring throughout the summer.

Cheryl Sizov also provided an update on the McClellan Station. Currently, Sound Transit is stepping back from the design of the station and is working with the City to hire a consultant to study transportation,

development, and design concerns. City Design, Strategic Planning Office and Sound Transit are working together on this. It was noted that the urban design concerns and roadway issues go hand in hand. Cheryl will report back on the scope of the contract when it is further developed. Hopefully, the study will be completed this summer so that the McClellan station will be back in the design process by fall. Mathew brought up the question of how far back the City and Sound Transit will step in reviewing design—stating that ultimately we are facing a deadline to proceed with station design, and he hopes people keep that in mind.

Debora Ashland updated the Panel on the status of the Capitol Hill and First Hill stations, stating that the designs are being redone to accommodate transit-oriented development and are not yet ready for presentation. Jon said he hoped LRRP could review the work before any major decisions are made that constrain design. Paul Bay added that Sound Transit wants to ensure that any additional design work done for the substructure to accommodate future development will be workable, otherwise the cost is too great. Jon asked whether a temporary headhouse could be developed in case permanent development moves more slowly. Paul Bay said that might be a possibility.

## **MLK Corridor Follow-Up**

Jon Layzer led a discussion regarding follow up on the MLK JR Way corridor that was presented at the April 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. No formal action was taken at the time but the panel felt further discussion was warranted. Comments were as follows:

- Sound Transit clearly has more work to do, in particular the planted landscape, sidewalk and lighting issues. Not all details are expected to be worked out at this point but a better comprehensive design is desired.
- Since the entire street is being redesigned, the idea of redoing the signage should be considered. City signage requirements should be considered but there are some real possibilities here. Unique signage would enhance the distinction of the street and could be part of the overall design statement.
- Sidewalks also can be looked at during this phase. Do the sidewalks necessarily have to meet City standards or is this an opportunity to break away and add to the uniqueness of the street? There are safety issues which the standards address so this must be kept in mind. The deep broom finish and the color are reasonable ideas, however, the various other elements will also aid in the distinction of this street.
- The 45 degree offset of the sidewalk may be incompatible with safety concerns regarding sidewalk guidelines. If you don't commit to a particular sidewalk orientation, ideas can continue to be developed and considered, effectively expanding the vocabulary and definition of sidewalks.
- Lighting and OCS are integral components of one another and again, all aspects need to be considered in the early design process. We need a comprehensive presentation on lighting options. The fixture that was presented at the last meeting has not yet been approved by City Light but was presented as though the fixture design decision was already made. More time needs to be dedicated to continue the examination of lighting options. Though the presenters did a terrific job of showing what the street and fixtures might look like, it was a lot of information for one meeting and these components need to be broken down more and looked at individually.
- Operational issues need to be addressed before the design elements can be decided. Police and Fire are talking with Sound Transit regarding access for emergencies, are mapping out where access will be and moving towards the designation of selected access points.
- The community has some significant safety issues. The issue of signal timing and how this helps the street function is important.

The panel decided to issue a formal action which will help address these issues and inventory them as the design phase goes into affect. Ideally this will help with continuity of the core elements and aid in determining what the future key events will be. Cheryl Sizov was asked to prepare a formal action item and send it to panel members for review.

## **Briefing for Roosevelt and Northgate Stations**

*Jeanne Krikawa, Sound Transit*

Jean Krikawa began the presentation with an overview of the Roosevelt Station options. There are currently four options which were presented at a public meeting the previous night. The purpose of the meeting was to reengage the community and reevaluate the station locations. The Roosevelt community clearly wants a tunnel station. The main concern from community members was the construction impact of each option.

The first option is the 45<sup>th</sup> street tunnel which will curve toward the freeway, coming through a portal which will result in a temporary relocation of the freeway off ramp. The ramp will be rebuilt afterwards. The next option is a long elevated tracks which jumps over Lake City Way. Rainbow Park would look directly on to the tracks. There would be a cut in the hillside along this area that would have to be coordinated with the ramps on 85<sup>th</sup>. Another option is the Eighth Avenue Station. This would be elevated and the entry would be south of 65<sup>th</sup>, parallel to I-5. Since Ravenna Boulevard is historic, Sound Transit would work closely with adjoining agencies to ensure that historic significance is not taken away during this process. Finally the Twelfth Avenue Station has been moved given the development surrounding the primary proposed location. Fiberoptic cables located under twelfth and the 42 inch sewer lines are issues noted. Sound Transit is working with QFC which is receptive to redevelopment in the area. The last option seems to meet the goals of the community and appeared to be the favored one.

Jean then continued with a description of the Northgate area. She relayed that the board had not decided on which side of the street the station will be located. One option would need to provide an overhead walkway. Restrooms are also being provided at Northgate. The issue of location and facility supervision was discussed. Restrooms will need to be in a secured area or an area where staff can have a level on control to ensure that proper usage is not being abused. The facility has to be maintainable and Sound Transit is in early discussions regarding this. The construction of the tracks will result in a terminus that will extend north. There is also a possible 700-800 unit housing development being proposed so the issue of connecting to that future development should be examined. The proposed guideway will serve as a transition/touchdown structure. The construction of the guideway will impact the first building south of the proposed development. King County would like to see buses continuing to run during this phase but no details yet since the location of the station has been decided. People at the meeting were not so much concerned about station issues as they were station location.

Sound Transit is planning a more intensive workshop in June which will include cost updates. Even though the board makes the decision regarding location in July, this timeline will not affect the design schedule. The panel would like Jeanne to share results of future meeting as they give valuable insight of community views.

A member of the public in attendance expressed his perception of people's support for the Twelfth Avenue Station. He spoke with Metro representatives and relayed frustration over identification of the circulating bus system. He would like Metro to provide more routes running east to west along 66<sup>th</sup>

Avenue. Jon Layzer noted that Metro won't be able to provide more service along 66<sup>th</sup> since the cost of neighborhood circulation is very high. It is more economical for them to rely on the "Spine" system where ridership cost is significantly lower. Jon added that the Panel will want to talk further about urban design implications for each of the alternatives, wondering if an aerial guideway could ultimately be more expensive when design impacts are mitigated and addressed. No action was taken and the Panel thanked Jeanne for the presentation.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10pm.